**Is Telepractice Right For You?**

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Over the last several years, telepractice has continued to grow quickly as noted in an increase in articles in peer-reviewed journals,  the number of companies providing these services, and in the number of attendees at conference sessions about telepractice.  Research indicates that using this service delivery model is effective and efficient.  Stakeholders (school district personnel, clinicians, clients/students and parents) indicate they are satisfied with the model and school districts, in particular, continue to be faced with large caseloads and/or shortages. Telepractice has become more mainstream as well as an attractive option for schools and for private practitioners wanting to expand their reach.  It allows clinicians to serve clients who might not otherwise receive quality services due to specialized services needed (eg: apraxia, autism, etc.), shortage of service providers and difficulty retaining high quality special education practitioners.  Telepractice is also a means to meet the needs of culturally diverse students.

One of the areas that is not widely researched or discussed, is how to determine whether or not, a clinician is right for telepractice.  Many practitioners, particularly “early adopters” have jumped into telepractice with little or no training and, no information about what it takes to provide quality, ethical, online speech and language services. Now, many more clinicians are interested in telepractice, not just those early adopters.  Frequently, clinicians sign up with a telepractice  company, or decide to provide this service delivery model in their private practice with little knowledge about whether or not they have the skills, knowledge or personality that fits this model. Many of the larger companies provide minimal training on their platforms and assume that all clinicians are a good fit.

This session will explore what clinicians need to know before diving into telepractice services, personality and clinical styles that best fit telepractice and how to obtain the training that will assist them in being a highly qualified, ethical service provider.  Gaining an understanding of their own clinical style, what questions  need to be asked, and determining whether telepractice is a good fit, will lead to greater comfort when making the leap into telepractice. It will assist in providing high quality, ethical services that meet the needs of clients in difficult to serve areas and those with specialized needs.